Mr. Speaker, this

evening I introduced a bipartisan resolution

expressing the disapproval of the

Arab League’s decision to hold its 2006

summit in Khartoum, Sudan. The resolution

also calls on the Arab League,

the government of Sudan, the Sudanese

rebels and the world community to do

all they can to end acts of genocide in

the Darfur region of Sudan.

Recently, the Arab League announced

its decision to hold its annual

summit in Khartoum. Doing so will

only lend credibility to a country that

is currently under sanction by the

United States. The Sudanese government

continues to allow acts of genocide

to occur in the Darfur region and

deliberately obstructs the African

Union’s ability to stabilize the region.

Mr. Speaker, the current situation in

the Darfur region of Sudan is dire. The

U.N. estimates that as many as 180,000

have died, many of starvation and disease,

and up to 2 million have been displaced.

The Darfur conflict is an ongoing

conflict in the Darfur region of western

Sudan, mainly between the Janjaweed,

a government-supported militia recruited

from local Arab tribes, and the

non-Arab rebels in the region. The

Janjaweed has been implicated in a

campaign of murder, rape and intimidation

sponsored by the government of

Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, I do not need to remind

this House of the horrors that we have

turned a blind eye to in the past. The

U.S. still will not recognize the Ottoman

Empire’s genocide of over a million

Armenians from 1914 to 1921.

It took us far too long to join the

fight against the systematic statesponsored

persecution and genocide of

the Jews of Europe during World War II

by Nazi Germany. And of course our

shameful disregard for the 937,000

Tutsis and moderate Hutus that died at

the hands of organized bands of militias

during the Rwandan genocide.

As the leader of the free world, we

have a moral obligation to do all we

can to stop genocide in all its forms. It

was in 1998 when President Clinton

said, and I quote, never again must we

be shy in the face of evidence describing

the failed U.S. response to the

Rwandan genocide. Well, here we are, 8

years later, standing on the sidelines

once again in the face of undisputable

evidence.

So in light of the current situation,

why would the Arab League decide to

have their annual summit in Sudan? I

understand that the site of the Arab

League summit is determined by an alphabetical

order rotation. However,

genocide calls for more than business

as usual, and that is the attitude that

the Arab League is now using.

If there is one organization that has

influence over the Sudanese government

it is the Arab League. Member

countries have a responsibility to rein

in the Sudanese government and to do

everything in their power to stop this

genocide now.

I believe the Arab League’s decision

to hold this 2006 summit in Khartoum

constitutes an economic and symbolic

reward and could even encourage the

government of Sudan to continue to

allow acts of genocide and other mistreatment

against the people of Darfur.

Mr. Speaker, the Arab League has a

choice to make. Ignore a genocide and

go forward with their planned summit

or break the alphabetical tradition and

send a message to Khartoum to do all

it can to end the acts of genocide, to

allow international peacekeepers to

protect the innocent and to hold the

Arab militia responsible for these acts

accountable. This is an opportunity for

the Arab League to lead. It is time for

them to send the right message to the

Sudanese government.

I would urge my colleagues to join

my resolution. It is bipartisan, expressing

disapproval of the Arab League’s

decision to hold its 2006 summit in

Khartoum. It is time to send a strong

message that the Sudanese government

should be reprimanded, not rewarded

for their support of genocide.